1: Hocart Y-5 (ca. 1920) 1929 OQ6 Lau OQ6
Lakemba

others got land in this way from Narewandamu. A sister's son may not seize land by right of *vasu* (*vasuta*); he can only get it by "causing to fall."

Of old, Matailakemba, Vatuwangga, and the rest had each their strangers from Totoya, from Tonga, and other parts. A stranger got land from the edge of the oven to which he was attached; when he died it went back to the clan. Since the Lands Commission has been inaugurated, this is no longer possible, as the Tongans have been grouped together as a side of the oven; the land is therefore lost to the four groups of nobles and remains with the Tongans. There are some Solomon Islanders now living in Tanggalevu and treated as members of the clan. In olden times, a nobleman would beg a bit of land to plant in, and when the food was mature he would share it with the owner.

Some Europeans take the view that the land belongs to the chiefs; this is a claim made by some of the chiefs and nobles. Ratu Finau claims that all the land as far as Ono is the property of the Sau. "It belongs to the Chief: God appointed him."

Salesi, a nobleman (Pl. I, *A*) expressed the following opinion concerning a disputed land:

> Navutoka properly belongs to Thekena. It belongs to Katumbalevu in so far as the nobles have smitten Thekena; but it is not right for the chiefs to oppress the people. Some people imagine they are chiefs by themselves and forget that, but for the landsmen, they would not be chiefs. The present nobility owe much to Yandrana because the nobles used to invade Lakemba from Yandrana[16] and Yandrana and Natokalau took their part against Thekena. A chief is apt to forget that the ancients of Yandrana and Natokalau died for their sakes.

Joshua, a nobleman, says, "The chief only disposed of what was brought to them. He did not dispose of the land; each owner disposed of his own."

Semi of Tanggalevu says,

> The nobles of old had no land; they had only the authority (*lewa*); it is only since the Tongan rule and the Government that it extends to the soil. They could not take land; only the sister's son could bring land to the nobles; the elders of the landsmen (*matua kai vanua*) would decide to give land for their sister's son to plant in. The nobles used to refer to us landsmen. Land would be provided for strangers by Envoy to Mbau, Envoy to Thithia (that is Thekena), and the Lord of Tumbou. If Roko Taliai wanted land for the people of Levuka he would say, "Tui Tumbou, let it be your part to provide taro land for the Levuka people to plant in." And the land was given. To Envoy to Mbau he would say, "Give some land to the Tongans." He did not dispose of it; he referred it to the old men.

CHATTELS

All property other than land is called either food (*kakana*) or manufactured articles (*i yau*). These two categories are continually opposed to

[16] When they came over from Naiau to conquer Lakemba.

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one another, and they are also expressed by different possessives; *nona* refers to manufactured articles; *kena*, food.

The term *i yau* covers all such articles as mats, bark cloth, canoes, whale's teeth ornaments, kava bowls, oil, raw mulberry bark, pots, coir. That is, however, not the etymological meaning of the word which is an instrumental derivative of *yau*, to bring—*i yau* is therefore what is brought, that which is used as gifts. It is a difficult word to translate: I shall use the terms : manufactured articles, stuff, goods, property, gifts, as may best suit.

Whale's teeth, called *tambua*, probably from *tambu*, sacred, are polished and rubbed with oil and turmeric, and thus acquire a reddish tint. They are suspended on a coir string attached at both ends. These ornaments are becoming increasingly scarce, but are still valued as potent presents.

BEGGING SYSTEM

The looseness found in the transference of land applies even more so to chattels owing to the custom of begging from one another (*kerekere*). The Fijian practice of *kerekere* is one of the corner stones of Fijian life, so much so that to translate the term as begging is erroneous, for there is no stigma attached to *kerekere;* it is a normal practice, perhaps better translated with Dr. B. Malinowski, soliciting. If there is no kava in the house a young person will be sent to beg some from neighbors. Should a man want land to plant in, he begs it; if he is in want of money, he goes to a kinsman and begs for some, or he begs for the use of the coconut trees on a certain land in order to make copra and sell it to the stores. To take an example: Taumbale, a woman of Moala, wanted money to build a house, so she came to Fane, Salesi's wife, because they were sisters on account of their mothers being sisters, and begged to use Salesi's coconut trees. She and the men who were doing the work were put up at Salesi's and took part in the family work, Taumbale helping in the household work. The day of a church collection is a great begging time, as many have to beg in order to have enough to put in the plate.

Tongans are given to beg from all and sundry; Fijians beg from kinsfolk only. Tongans are reckless in begging; Fijians have a sense of delicacy (*mandua*).

When a man comes to a kinsman with a big request he usually brings a begging gift (*i kerei*) which he offers up (*vakathambo*) with the usual formula of apology, explaining his request and appealing to their ties of kinship. This is especially done when a village comes to make a request to a nobleman.

2: Thompson E-5 (1933-1934)1940 OQ6 Lau OQ6
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423 [674] day and by adults on dark nights. Mango trees are especially molested by trespassers.

On Fulanga each clan owns two trees, a *tarai* and a *mbau,* located in the bush. These trees are called *mbilita* (that is, *mbilita ni matanggali Vunikoro-mbilita* of the Vunikoro clan, etc.), and each has a name. They belong exclusively to the proprietary clan and only members of that clan are allowed to pick the fruit. The names of the *tarai* trees belonging to the clans of Muanaithake village are: Tarainanga of Vunikoro; Ulumburu of Rasea; Lavenimbumbu of Vandravandra; Kawakawaloa of Nasava; and Taraimbavu of Sau. The ground around the *mbilita* is kept free of bush and weeds. A stone circle is built around the *mbau mbilita* and the *mbau* fruits are picked green, thrown into the enclosure, covered with leaves, and allowed to ripen. A ditch, called *ovaova,* is dug around the trunk of the *tarai mbilita* but the fruit is allowed to ripen on the tree. According to the natives, the *mbilita* custom came about in the following way. In olden days when a man found a good *mbau* or *tarai* tree, he cleared the ground around the trunk and the tree became the *mbilita* of his clan or of his household. Today there are no *mbilita* belonging [184] to households. I did not find the *mbilita* custom on other islands. The Kambarans had never heard of it.

Fishing rights are village property. The lagoons of an island are divided by the adjacent villages, and for inhabitants of one village to use the ground of another village without permission means loss of prestige. Fishponds and equipment used in village communal fishing are village property.

Water holes and communally built reservoirs, located in the village, are owned by the village and used by its inhabitants. Water holes located in the bush are usually free. There is a dispute regarding the ownership of Wai Mariko, a fresh water hole near Tokalau, which is claimed by two clans, Vuanitavola and Vuanikathu. The village cemetery belongs to the village but each clan has a lot in it.

Moveable Property

422 *I yau* is a native classification of property which may be defined as moveable property. The natives are not quite sure just what the term includes. When they speak of *i yau* they think mainly of craft goods such as mats, tapa, woodwork, coconut oil, sennit, and canoes. They say whales' teeth are also *i yau* but usually mention them separately. Pigs, fowl, turtles, and food (*kakana*) are also classed as *i yau* but the natives are not sure whether houses should be included.

422 556 436 The most valuable objects in Lau are whales' teeth. They serve as a means by which wealth may be accumulated, condensed, stored, and exchanged. The value of other objects cannot be expressed in terms of whales' teeth, thus they

2: Thompson E-5 (1933-1934)1940 OQ6 Lau OQ6
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cannot be classed as a medium of exchange or true money. They are "valuables." (See Tueting, 25, p. 36.)

Whales' teeth are used only ceremonially. They are the most important objects of ceremonial exchange. A request accompanied by the ceremonial presentation of a whale's tooth cannot be refused without the loss of a great deal of prestige. Whales' teeth are acquired by chiefs and government officials as tribute from the people, hence the chiefs and the officials possess most of the whales' teeth in Fiji.

According to Mariner (19, p. 302), it formerly was dangerous for a man other than a chief to possess a whale's tooth. This is not true today. By amassing sufficient wealth a clan or an individual may acquire whales' teeth through ceremonial exchange.

In general, ownership of moveable property is determined by labor. Manufactured goods such as mats, sennit, coconut oil, and woodwork, made mainly by one individual or household, belong to the maker and are considered the property of the household. By the *kerokere* system (p. 207), however, they may be solicited at any time by the clan to be used for tribute or ceremonial exchanges. Objects which are the result of communal labor (such as houses, canoes, and barkcloth) and are paid for by means of feasts, are considered to be the property of the individual who organized and paid for the labor. The clan has an interest in them, since clan resources were used to make the payments. Other objects of communal industry such as large fishnets, turtle nets, and goods for tribute (canoes, sails, woodwork, mats, and tapa), which are the result of the combined efforts of a whole village, are considered to be village property. Government houses, turtle nets or large fish nets, and boats, made by island or district labor are the property of the district or island.

Personal possessions such as kilts, dance skirts, ornaments, fans, cane knives, baskets, and sleeping mats are the property of the individual but are always liable to be solicited, unless they are tabu. Designs (*kupetchi*) for rubbing on barkcloth are owned by individual women. They are inherited from a woman by her daughter. A man's private property is inherited by his sons. If the sons are young, his older brother becomes their guardian unless they are adopted into their mother's clan, in which case their mother's father or older brother becomes the guardian.

Incorporeal Property

Tales (*talanoa*) of clan traditions are owned by the clan and may be told only by the clan headman. The natives say this privilege is accorded to the headman out of respect. Medicines and spells are the property of the individual. They are usually kept secret and handed down from parent to child. I found no privately owned *mcke*.